

I understand that it is impossible for our magazine to do propaganda work on so-called "broad questions," but let me beg of you not to "avoid issues." Is it logical for you to interest us in such subjects distinctly outside the four walls of a sick room, as social hygiene, school hygiene, almshouse reform, child-labor laws, factory inspection, etc., if your attitude on "broad questions" is to remain neutral?

All of these subjects mentioned lead one directly to the fact that only through the ballot, in this country, can one hope for really lasting improvement. For instance, my state association appointed me to visit our county almshouse; I had the opportunity to do this thoroughly, and also to get unprejudiced, accurate information about the management of the place. I found that one could be a "lady visitor," and serve ice cream to the "inmates," give an entertainment once in a while, or send clothing, but I also found that it was quite impossible to be of any direct use in improving wretched methods and conditions, unless one were a trustee. I asked a man "who knew," if a woman could be appointed a trustee, when there was a vacancy on the board. He answered very promptly, "Oh, no." "Why?" I asked. He replied, "She has no vote." Then I reflected that in my state, Maryland, women are placed on the same plane, politically, as the half-witted "inmates," I had just seen. It gave me a bad hour, but it made me think.

You may imagine my disappointment when the "delegates representing 14,000" turned down by a large majority, in San Francisco, the obvious fact, that "until men and women have equal political rights, they cannot do their best work"—how *could* they have done it? It seemed a case of "so much the worse for the facts." My next hope was that our magazine would present the question fairly to us, at least, but alas, I find the editorial staff is in the "twilight zone" of neutrality and brushes this vital question carelessly aside.

Are we only to regard your JOURNAL in the light of a primary instructor, or can we expect real help from you after you have taught us to think? If you continue to remain neutral on the woman suffrage movement, may I suggest to you that your logical attitude must be that "a nurse's place is *inside* the sick room, not mixing up in affairs outside of her sphere."

MARY BARTLETT DIXON, R.N.,

Johns Hopkins Hospital, 1903.

Easton, Maryland, September 10, 1908.

[The editorial policy of the JOURNAL in regard to the suffrage and all important questions is determined by the Board of Directors. The

President of the JOURNAL COMPANY is also the president of the Associated Alumnae, of which association the JOURNAL is now and has always been the official organ. The JOURNAL and the Associated Alumnae are practically one, and until such time as the Associated Alumnae are ready to endorse suffrage, the JOURNAL's policy must remain neutral.

Personally, I regret the action of the delegates at the San Francisco meeting, and if I had been present I should have thrown the weight of my voice in favor of suffrage, but probably this would not have influenced the result of the vote, as I understand the subject was ably argued by members who support the suffrage movement.

Miss Anthony, herself, came to realize in her later years that suffrage was a matter of education, that it could not be forced upon the people until they were ready for it. I am inclined to think that the delegates at the San Francisco meeting represented either the sentiment of their home associations, or voted against it from doubt as to what that sentiment was. Nothing does the cause of suffrage greater harm than intolerant criticism which takes the form of personalities. The action taken at San Francisco has brought the matter of suffrage sharply before the nurses of the country. There are in every city opportunities for the study of this matter and I believe the time has come when our organizations may well devote careful, moderate and sane consideration to the whole broad subject.

In my judgment those nurses who were instrumental in turning the vote against the suffrage movement should give their reasons through this department of the magazine.

I do not wish to enter into any personal contention with Miss Dixon in regard to her letter of criticism of the JOURNAL's editorial attitude more than to say that the subjects, which she refers to, of social hygiene, school hygiene, almshouse reform, child-labor laws, and factory inspection are distinctly nursing subjects, because they have to do directly with the health of the people, and because nurses are engaged professionally in these various lines of occupation, while suffrage is, in my judgment, a social subject with an indirect bearing upon nursing matters.

SOPHIA F. PALMER, R.N.

Permanent member of the Associated Alumnae, and Editor-in-Chief of the JOURNAL.]

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EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO MISS DOCK

As a nurse intensely interested in the suffrage movement, both here and in England, may I thank you for your splendid letter in the last